

Steps In The Three Artistic Processes

The chart below illustrates some of the key steps of the artistic processes and highlights the steps which are common to two or more processes.

Creating	Performing	Responding
Imagining developing idea(s) (concepts, ideas, feelings)	Selecting choosing an artistic work (repertoire) to perform	Selecting choosing an artistic work and/or performance to experience
Planning experimenting, researching and designing ways of presenting the idea(s) through artistic materials	Analyzing analyzing structure and researching background of work	Analyzing seeing/hearing and comprehending visual/aural features of the work and performance mentally assembling what is seen/heard into a whole
	Interpreting developing a personal interpretation of work (an idea of its expressive intent or potential)	Interpreting developing a personal response to (constructing meaning from) the expressive ideas of both the creator(s) and performer(s)
Making, Evaluating, Refining applying understandings and skills/techniques to bring idea(s) to life through artistic work evaluating quality and refining successive versions ("drafts") of the work	Rehearsing, Evaluating, Refining applying understandings and skills/techniques to bring personal interpretation to life through performance evaluating quality and refining successive versions of the performance	Evaluating evaluating quality of artistic work and its performance
presenting presenting in performance or exhibiting completed work for others	presenting performing work for others	

From "Assessment in General Music: An Overview," by Scott C. Shuler. *The Orff Echo* 28, no 2 (winter 1996): 10 – 12. Used with Permission.

The three artistic processes are not mutually exclusive but, rather, share common types of thinking and doing. For example – as illustrated by aligning “selecting,” “analyzing,” “interpreting” and “evaluating” across the three columns on page 22 – there are several steps which are shared by more than one process.

The fact that the artistic processes share common steps is one important reason why creating and performing the arts can prepare students to respond to the arts as educated audience members. For example, when students learn to evaluate their own artistic creations, it helps them learn to respond with improved critical understanding to works they see or hear performed, and to use those experiences as the basis for future choices about which works they choose to respond in the future. When students learn to evaluate and improve their own music or dance compositions during the creating process, they are better prepared to evaluate and select quality literature created by others, either for their own performance when purchasing commercial recordings, or when choosing concerts to attend.

As teachers help their students learn to carry out a step successfully in one process, they should also encourage them to transfer that learning to the other processes. For example, teachers can help students transfer what they learn during the creating process to the responding process by introducing students to the works of others while the students are creating their own work. Teachers can have students who are solving specific creative problems view/listen to how other artists have solved some of the same problems, then encourage the students to consider whether and how to incorporate those solutions into their own creations. In a music composition class, for example, students might think critically about how other composers have achieved contrast between sections in an ABA form or used a soft ending to provide a sense of closure to a loud, rambunctious work. In a visual arts studio class the teacher might ask students to examine how different painters have achieved a sense of foreground and background.

Implications for Assessment. The three artistic processes also provide useful models for assessing student work. It is for this reason that these processes were adopted by the designers of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) as the underlying framework for the 1997 NAEP arts assessment. The above definitions of the three processes were adapted from the NAEP framework and specifications documents.¹

GOAL 4: As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will understand and use the materials, techniques, forms (structures, styles, genres), language, notation (written symbol system) and literature/repertoire of each art form.

In order to carry out the artistic processes successfully, students must master the core skills and understandings of each art form.

Students must understand and know how to apply the media, techniques and forms of the arts. The *materials* of the arts range from the human body in dance; to the human voice and other musical instruments—including electronic media—for the creation of sound in music; to words, gestures, movement, props, scenery and sometimes electronic media in theatre; to a wide variety of visual media in the visual arts. Specific *techniques* for using each of these materials or media have evolved and continue to evolve over time as artistic ideas and conventions change, typically varying from one historical period or culture to another. Similarly, the *forms* into which these materials are shaped have varied, such as from the highly mannered, subtle nuances of Asian court dance to the more spontaneous expressive forms of Western modern dance. While it would be impossible to master all forms in all of the arts, local schools should help students begin the journey in the process familiarizing them with as broad a range as possible, while still fostering depth of learning and expression in a few.

Specialized *language* is important to use in helping students conceptualize and communicate about what occurs in works of art. Each art form has its own vocabulary and guiding principles, which often vary from one culture or historical period to another. Students should learn to apply these terms when describing, analyzing and evaluating art work. They should also engage in dialogue about how and why these terms and principles vary. This often provides insight into the peoples and times from which they emerged (see Goal 4). In addition, students should compare vocabulary and concepts from one art form to another. There is some overlap in vocabulary between arts disciplines, as in the common use of the words “line” or “technique,” but the meaning of such words often differs widely from one art form to another. Examining comparisons and contrasts can lead to new insight into each art form. Reading, writing, speaking and listening to others speak about art also reinforces students’ language arts learning (see Goal 9).

Written *notation* is one means by which creators of works of performing arts (dance, music and theatre) have preserved their work and shared it with others. Traditional Western music notation is the most familiar example, but there are others. Many dancers and theatrical performers make use of Laban or Benesh notation. These written symbol systems play the same important role as alphabets and written words in language arts classes. Learning to read and write notation is particularly important in music classes because of the extent to which notation is used in that art form. In dance classes the use of notation is less universal, but is often used as a

Each art form has its own body of *literature* or *repertoire*, which consists of art works that have been created—and, in the performing arts, performed—throughout human history. This literature plays the same important role in arts education as written literature plays in language arts classes. Students should study and perform a variety of existing works as they create and perform their own original work. One objective of such study is to help students understand and appreciate a broad range of artistic literature, as called for in Goal 6. Another objective is to enable students to draw on a personal repertoire of original work created by others as they create their own, much as innovative scientists draw on the work of others as they conduct their own investigations.

There are content and performance standards in each arts discipline which link to Goal 4. In music, for example, content standards 1 and 2 (performing a variety of literature), 5 (notation), 6 (analyzing form and using vocabulary) and 9 (understanding music from a variety of cultures and historical periods) are among those that address this goal.

GOAL 5: *As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will appreciate the importance of the arts in expressing and illuminating human experiences, beliefs and values.*

One of the most important functions of the arts throughout history and across cultures has been and continues to be the expression of ideas, concepts and feelings. Accordingly, the arts afford students a window into understanding the most important experiences and concerns of individual artists and cultures across millennia around the world. In modern America the pervasive presence of artistic media—from film to television to telecommunications—makes it even more essential that students cultivate their artistic understanding and literacy.

The arts also provide students with a vehicle for conveying their own ideas, concepts and feelings. In fact, many students find in one or more of the arts their most effective ways of learning and of communicating with others.

The content standards in all four arts disciplines make reference to the roles, functions and nature of the arts in various cultures and historical periods. Hence, they address not only Goal 5, but Goal 6 as well.

GOAL 6: *As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will identify representative works and recognize the characteristics of art, music, theatre and dance from different historical periods and cultures.*

For students to understand unfamiliar art work, they should have a personal repertoire of familiar art works which they can draw from their memories. These familiar works act as points of reference when they approach unfamiliar work, providing a basis for comparison and contrast. If schools help students to develop a broad enough personal repertoire and help them to build key concepts or understandings from that repertoire, then these students will be prepared to accept, understand and enjoy the richness of experience that the arts offer. Schools can help students to develop their repertoires by having them apply their vocabulary and skills to analyzing, comparing, drawing conclusions about, creating work in the style of, and—in the performing arts—performing a variety of artistic literature.

As described in reference to Goal 5, the Connecticut arts standards include at least one content standard in the each arts discipline (e.g., content standard 5 in dance, 9 in music, 8 in theatre and 4 in the visual arts) which outlines the expectation that students understand the roles, functions and nature of the arts in various cultures and historical periods.

GOAL 7: *As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will develop sufficient mastery of at least one art form to continue lifelong involvement in that art form not only as responders (audience members), but also as creators or performers.*

In addition to developing a broad background in all of the arts, every student should develop a deeper proficiency in and personal commitment to at least one art form. Students should achieve sufficient depth in at least one arts discipline to be able to derive the lifelong satisfaction that comes through active participation in creating and performing art, thereby also contributing to the vitality of American culture. Such active participation is also likely to lead students to branch out into other art forms, thereby further broadening their perspective on and enjoyment of life. The content and performance standards in each discipline recommend that students apply their arts understandings and skills to creating and/or performing within that discipline.

To ensure that students achieve this goal, schools need to require that every student takes a sequence of courses in at least one arts discipline designed to enable him or her to achieve the Grade 12 performance standards in that discipline. Assuming that all students receive a comprehensive, rigorous and sequential course of instruction in all of the arts in Grades K-8, schools can achieve this goal by requiring all students to elect at least two years of rigorous, high school study in an arts discipline.

GOAL 8: *As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will develop sufficient mastery of at least one art form to be able to pursue further study, if they choose, in preparation for a career.*

Some students may choose to pursue further study in preparation for a career either in the arts or an arts-related field. Arts schools and employers carefully screen students' auditions, portfolios and transcripts to select those who bring a strong background in making (creating and performing) and understanding (responding to) the arts.

Secondary schools should provide interested students with opportunities to elect the advanced arts courses that are essential preparation for further study, such as entry into university arts programs and arts work apprenticeships. Advanced arts courses should enable students to achieve, and if possible exceed, the levels of performance described in the Grades 9-12 performance standards. In arts disciplines, where they exist, elective courses should include Advanced Placement offerings.

As discussed in Chapter 1, there are many careers for which an arts background is important. Examples include:

- professional artist, specializing in one or more art forms;
- technician/designer;
- arts teacher or therapist;
- writer/historian;
- arts management/administration;
- marketing or advertising;
- architecture; and
- media.

More detailed examples of careers related to each art form may be found in the discipline-specific subsections of this chapter.

GOAL 9: *As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will seek arts experiences and participate in the artistic life of the school and community.*

In preparation for a lifetime of involvement in the arts, students should begin to pursue avenues for arts experiences outside the school. Schools, therefore, should encourage students to:

- identify and participate in artistic experiences within the school and community;
- display and present contributions to artistic shows, performances and cultural events; and
- become advocates for the arts.

Students should learn to appreciate their own work and the work of other students, and to support the artistic resources and events offered by the school. As students mature, this commitment can extend to the local community. Committed students are motivated to find arts resources in their local community (galleries, museums, instrumental and vocal ensembles, classes, theaters, dance groups, historic/cultural institutions, etc.) which suit their interests.

Students should become comfortable showing or performing their work for others. Through this process they learn the value of sharing what is created.

As students learn to value the arts, they should also be encouraged to take an active role in community planning, advocating for the use of aesthetic criteria in decision making.

GOAL 10: *As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will understand connections between the arts, other disciplines and daily life.*

There are many relationships among the arts, between the arts and other disciplines, and between the arts and daily life. In Connecticut's arts standards there is one content standard for each arts discipline (content standard 7 in dance, 8 in music, 6 in theatre and 6 in the visual arts) which calls specifically for students to understand and apply those connections. However, other standards also call for students to understand relationships among disciplines. For example, content standard 6 in dance calls for students to "make connections between dance and healthful living," reflecting the need for dancers also to understand concepts of health education. Standards in each art form call for students to understand that art form in its cultural and historical context, highlighting important connections between the arts and social studies. Similarly, in each arts discipline students are asked to describe, analyze and evaluate the quality of art work, a process that affords opportunities to combine their arts understandings with language arts skills.

Students who understand such connections are able to:

- solve problems which involve more than one art form;
- make connections between disciplines; and
- apply their arts learning in their lives outside school and careers.

Students should be able to describe relationships among the arts and integrate two or more art forms to convey ideas. Discussion of the terminology and concepts shared among the arts – such as line, repetition,

dynamics, movement, pattern and texture – can open up this integrating process. Students should explore and compare the ways various art forms can convey a particular concept, idea or feeling. Multimedia projects also fall into this category. Students should be encouraged to consider and experiment with differing combinations of forms, evaluating which combination is most successful to express a particular idea.

Studying the arts can provide a vehicle for increasing student understanding of other disciplines. Students can use the critical and creative thinking skills developed through the arts to approach other areas of knowledge. As students' comprehension improves, interdisciplinary projects can increase their mastery of both the arts curriculum *and* the curriculums of other disciplines (see Chapter 3: Instructional Connections).

Chapter 1 describes some of the many ways citizens draw on the arts to solve problems and make decisions, from selecting clothing to mounting a multimedia marketing campaign. Schools should encourage students to apply their arts learning to daily life.■

Purpose Of Arts Standards

*The need for standards arises, in part, from the recognition that we Americans can never know how well our schools are doing without some coherent sense of results. We recognize an obligation to provide our children with the knowledge and skills that will equip them to enter society, work productively, and make their contributions as citizens. In short, we need the clarity and conviction to say, 'This is what a student should know and be able to do.'*²

– National Standards for Arts Education

The purpose of Connecticut's standards for arts education is to provide members of local curriculum committees with a comprehensive, coherent, contemporary description of what students should know and be able to do in the arts as a result of a K-12 education. The Connecticut standards are not a curriculum. Instead they provide a framework on which curriculum can be built. The standards are broad statements that district curriculum teams can use to develop their own objectives and instructional methodologies.

The standards do not favor one philosophical approach or teaching method over another. They also do not prescribe content – such as the particular literature (works of dance, music, theatre or visual arts), styles or

historical periods to be studied – nor do they prescribe the particular visual arts media in which students should work. These decisions are deliberately left to local school districts, based on local priorities and needs.

Suggested processes for turning standards into local curriculum objectives can be found in Chapter 4.■

Structure Of Connecticut Arts Standards

There are two levels of standards for each of the four arts disciplines:

- **K-12 content standards** are general descriptions of what students should know and be able to do in the art forms. Like goals, they are overarching statements of direction that remain constant throughout Grades K-12.

For example, visual arts content standard 4 calls for students to “understand the visual arts in relation to history and culture.”

- **Performance standards** specify what level of achievement students should attain in relation to each content standard by the completion of Grades 4, 8 and 12.

For example, under visual arts content standard 4 there are three performance standards at each of three grade levels. Performance standards become more rigorous as they evolve from one grade level to the next, as illustrated by the following:

- **Grades K-4:** “create art work that demonstrates understanding of how history or culture can influence visual art;”
- **Grades 5-8:** “analyze, describe and demonstrate how factors of time and place (such as climate, natural resources, ideas and technology) influence visual characteristics that give meaning and value to a work of art;” and
- **Grades 9-12:** “compare works of art to one another in terms of history, aesthetics and culture; justify conclusions made and use these conclusions to inform their own art making.”

The complete content and performance standards are located in the appropriate discipline-specific sections of this chapter.■

How Connecticut Standards Were Developed

The Connecticut standards presented in this guide were adapted from the National Standards for Arts Education.³ The committee developing Connecticut's standards chose to make a variety of revisions, refinements and additions to the national standards. Further revisions were made as a result of suggestions from expert national reviewers and from hundreds of Connecticut educators and other citizens who reviewed subsequent drafts.

Content standards and performance (referred to in the national document as "achievement") standards in every arts discipline have been revised to add the expectation that students learn to apply their arts learning to daily life and careers. Further changes to the national content standards in each discipline have been made for clarity.

In theatre, where the national document presented different content standards at each grade level, those three levels were combined and simplified into a single set of concise content standards for Grades K-12. Connecticut chose not to develop separate "advanced"

performance standards at Grade 12, but some of the advanced levels of the 12th grade national achievement standards in each art form were incorporated into the 12th grade Connecticut performance standards.

(NOTE: The discipline-specific sections of this chapter, which follow, present and illustrate the program goals and content standards for each of the four art forms.)

¹The College Board. *1996 NAEP Arts Education Assessment and Exercise Specifications*. Washington, DC: National Assessment Governing Board, 1994, prepublication edition.

²Music Educators National Conference. *National Standards for Arts Education: What Every Young American Should Know and Be Able to Do in the Arts*. Reston, VA: MENC, 1994.

³Music Educators National Conference. *National Standards for Arts Education: What Every Young American Should Know and Be Able to Do in the Arts*. Reston, VA: MENC, 1994.

